ADDRESS

DELIVERED

AT THE OPENING OF THE SESSION

IN THE

HEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

OF THE

FIRST ASSOCIATE REFORMED SYNOD OF THE WEST,

November 5th, 1851,

BY

JOHN T. PRESSLY, D. D.

PUBLISHED BY THE STUDENTS.

PITTSBURGH:
PRINTED BY W. S. HAVEN, CORNER OF MARKET AND SECOND STREETS.
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ADDRESS.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS:—

The office of the holy ministry, for the discharge of whose duties it is your object to prepare yourselves, is one, the importance of which cannot be too highly estimated. It stands intimately connected not only with the best interests of man in the present life, but with his eternal well-being in the world to come. The man who is invested with this office, comes from the court of heaven, intrusted with a message of mercy to a rebellious world. Accordingly, the Apostle says, "Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." And in the faithful discharge of his duty, the Christian Minister may be the honored instrument in the hand of God, of rescuing from destruction some of his fellow-men, who shall appear as his joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus, while he may be the occasion of aggravating the future condemnation of others who, under his ministry, shall perish in their unbelief. "We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life."

The office of the holy ministry, it is the will of God to commit to men of like passions with other men; and to qualify them for the faithful discharge of its duties, whatever other attainments may be desirable, it is essentially necessary that they themselves should be personally interested in the salvation of the gospel. It is of great importance that the Christian Minister should possess vigorous and discriminating powers of intellect; that these powers should be carefully cultivated by education; and that his mind should be richly stored with the treasures of learning. But no matter how familiar he may be with all the learning of the schools; no matter what may be the vigor of his intellect, nor how varied and extensive may be his literary acquirements, if he

has not been taught in the school of Christ, he lacks that qualification which is essential to the character of a good minister of Jesus Christ.

It will be remembered, that some time since you submitted for consideration the inquiry, "*What, in your opinion, are the chief impediments to the cultivation of a high degree of personal piety by candidates for the Gospel Ministry?*" You will allow me to express the gratification I have felt, in finding that a subject so intimately connected with your future comfort and usefulness, has occupied your thoughts. Your inquiry proceeds upon the supposition that the possession of genuine piety is an essential qualification in the character of a minister of the Gospel; and that while the possession of the reality of godliness is indispensable, high attainments in holiness are of the utmost importance to the faithful and successful discharge of the duties of the sacred office. And as there are difficulties in the way of every valuable acquisition, your inquiry supposes that there are some peculiar obstacles which must be surmounted by the aspirant to the sacred office, who would attain to an elevated standard of piety; and you desire that some of the impediments which lie in your way should be designated, accompanied with some directions which may assist you in overcoming them.

It may, perhaps, serve in some degree to facilitate our inquiries, and to assist us in coming to a correct conclusion, to keep distinctly in view the means by which the work of grace is commenced and advanced in the soul. And without undertaking to prove, I shall, on the present occasion, take it for granted that it is exclusively the work of the Holy Spirit, to produce in the human heart that change which constitutes man a new creature, and which is essential to the existence of genuine piety. But while it is the work of the Spirit of God to create in man a new heart, and raise to a state of spiritual life the soul which was dead in sin, it is a clearly revealed truth that this work is accomplished by the instrumentality of the Word of God. And hence, they who are new creatures in Jesus Christ, are said to be "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever." And as it is by the instrumentality of the Word of God, that the sinner is first brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light, so it is by the same means that the work of holiness is advanced in the soul. And hence, in the prayer which our Lord addresses to the Father in behalf of his followers, this langnage is employed: "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth." To the same conclusion are we conducted by the representation which the Scriptures give of the truth, as the spiritual

aliment of the believing soul. Under this view the truth is exhibited by the Apostle Peter, when he exhorts his christian brethren to abstain from everything which might tend to operate against the advancement of the divine life in the soul, and as new-born babes to desire the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby. And as an evidence of the admirable adaptation of the truth to this important end, it is described as containing not only milk for babes, but likewise strong meat for men of full age.

We seem, then, to be conducted naturally to the conclusion, that it is by the proper application of the truth as in Jesus, to his own soul, that the christian grows in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It is, then, by the appropriate application of the truth of God's Word, for the purposes for which it was intended, that it becomes the means of spiritual nourishment to the soul, so that the man of God may advance to perfection, being thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Perhaps, then, we should not greatly err, were we to say that the chief impediment to the attainment of a high degree of personal piety, on the part of candidates for the Holy Ministry, consists in the danger to which their peculiar pursuits expose them of making an improper use of the Word of God; or, at least, of failing to make an appropriate application of it, as the means of their own growth in grace. At first view, this remark may possibly awaken a degree of surprise. It might appear that as the Holy Scriptures constitute the great subject of study in a theological course, the peculiar pursuits of the candidate for the sacred office must be specially favorable to the cultivation of holiness. Wherein, then, consists the danger to which the Student of Theology is exposed, arising out of the studies in which he is engaged? Whence is there cause to apprehend that in the study of the Word of God, he may conduct his investigations in such a manner that the truth with which he is familiar may fail to be productive of its appropriate results in the advancement of personal holiness?

I. I would mention as the first impediment in the way of attaining a high degree of personal piety, on the part of the Student of Theology, the danger of examining the Word of God, and investigating the system of revealed truth, as though he were engaged in the study of a mere science. This danger may be said to arise chiefly from two sources.

(1.) In the first place, the danger has its origin in the nature of the study itself, in which he is engaged. The Student of Theology has, for a length of time been engaged in literary pursuits, and has just completed a course of scientific study. And now, instead of some elaborate treatise on Metaphysics, on Philosophy or Astronomy, he takes up the Bible to investigate the doctrines of Christianity. And such is the power of habit over our nature, that if he is not careful, he may insensibly take up the Sacred Volume and examine its contents, stimulated by a mere thirst for knowledge, after the manner in which he has been accustomed to search his text books, while employed in scientific studies. He may be fully convinced in his own mind, that the Bible is of divine origin, and that the truths which it reveals are of the utmost importance to man; and yet, practically, the volume of inspiration may be regarded in the light of the development of some scientific system; and its great principles may be investigated as matters of speculation, rather than as vital truths, which constitute the spiritual aliment of the renewed soul. It is not difficult to perceive that when the Scriptures are studied in this manner, there may be acquired an extensive theoretical acquaintance with the doctrines of Christianity, while there is no experience of the efficacy of these doctrines in advancing the life of God in the soul. And thus an impediment in the way of his advancement in holiness, may stand in immediate connection with the pursuit in which he is engaged.

(2.) In the next place, there is much in the system of revealed truth, to awaken the curiosity and excite the interest of the inquisitive mind; and hence, from the nature of the contents of the Bible, the Student of Theology is in danger of permitting his mind to be so completely occupied with its literary attractions, as to lose sight of the practical bearing of its precious truths. It is consequently a possible thing, that a curious and inquisitive mind may be intensely interested in the investigation of the Sacred Scriptures, while the grand incentive may be the participation of a literary feast for the gratification of the intellect, rather than the enjoyment of the bread of life, for the spiritual nourishment of the soul.

Viewed in the light of a literary production merely, the Bible is a wonderful book; and it opens up to the view of the curious and inquisitive mind a field of investigation, at once vast and peculiarly inviting. Here we have history which carries us back to the origin of things; and prophecy which conducts us forward to the grand consummation, when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements

shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." In this volume, we have communicated to us satisfactory information which can be obtained from no other source, on all subjects connected with man's highest interests both for time and eternity. The origin of the world; the creation of man; the glory and happiness of man's primitive state; his deplorable fall into a state of sin and misery, and the gracious provision made for his recovery and restoration to the favor of God are all unfolded in the most simple, plain and satisfactory manner. Here we have the history of the deluge, that dire calamity which the wickedness of man brought upon the earth; a fearful catastrophe, the evidence of whose universal prevalence is engraved in indelible characters upon the face of the globe. The rise and fall of the most ancient and powerful kingdoms are here traced by the unerring pen of inspired history. The most instructive narratives and the most beautiful allegories, are here spread before our view. Here poetry has taken her loftiest flights; has put forth her boldest conceptions, and has displayed her most splendid imagery. And in addition to all its other distinguishing excellencies, the Bible contains a system of morality, which, the enemies of divine revelation themselves being judges, is far superior to anything of which philosophers ever formed any conception.

There is, then, in the Bible, independent of its divine character, much to awaken the curiosity, and arouse the interest of the mere scholar; and the cultivated intellect may be so amused with its literary attractions, that the attention may be diverted from the practical influence of its vital truths. And the consequence is, that intellectual gratification, rather than spiritual benefit, may be the controling motive in the investigation of the Sacred Scriptures. And just in proportion as the mind of the Student is influenced by such a spirit in the study of the Scriptures, will his soul be the subject of leanness, while there is before him a plentiful supply of the bread of life.

II. Another impediment to the cultivation of a high degree of personal piety, on the part of the Student of Theology, has its origin in the temptation to which he is exposed, of attaching undue importance to those qualifications which render the ministry popular with men. The eloquent speaker will always command attention, and will never fail to secure the applause of admiring multitudes. And hence, the candidate for the sacred office is in danger of being led to seek with too great avidity, those acquirements which may serve to render him acceptable, to the neglect of that fervent piety which is requisite to

qualify him for doing good to the souls of men. And it must be admitted that where the powers of eloquence are possessed, the pulpit presents a favorable theatre for their display. And as the possession of oratorical powers unquestionably enables a man to exert a mighty influence over his fellow-men, and may thus contribute greatly to his extensive usefulness, it should be the object of every aspirant to the sacred office to acquire a popular manner. Unless we render ourselves in some degree acceptable as speakers, we cannot expect to gain the attention of our fellow-men; and without this, we cannot enjoy the opportunity of promoting their welfare by the declaration of the truth. Since, therefore, some attention is certainly due to this matter, while it is possible that it may occupy a place entirely too high in our regard, and may, therefore, interest our feelings to a hurtful degree, the practical difficulty is to draw the line of demarcation between that which is allowable, and that which is improper.

It is a duty which we owe to God and to our fellow-men, to cultivate with assiduity and diligence the powers which the Author of our being has bestowed upon us, with a view to qualify ourselves to unfold the truths of the Gospel in an agreeable and impressive manner. But such is the depravity of our nature, and such is the pride of our hearts, that a regard for our own popularity may lead us to attach greater importance to those acquisitions which command the admiration of man, than to the cultivation of that ardent piety which is necessary to secure the favor of God. And where such views and feelings gain an undue ascendency over the mind, our reading and conversation, and the bent of our thoughts, are likely to be directed to the acquisition of those qualifications which are showy and attractive, and which may subserve our own exaltation in the estimation of man, rather than to the possession of those gracious attainments which are essential to the character of a good minister of Jesus Christ. It can scarcely be necessary to observe, that just in proportion as the mind is controlled by such views and aspirations, an influence fatal to the advancement of living godliness must necessarily be exercised.

III. Another impediment to the cultivation of a high degree of personal piety on the part of those who are preparing for the Holy Ministry, consists in the danger of falling into the habit of studying the Word of God, rather with a view to qualify ourselves for the instruction of others, than from a regard to the profit of our own souls. The great business of the Christian Minister, is to expound to his fellow-men the will of God as revealed in the Oracles of Truth: "The priest's lips should

keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts." In his whole preparatory course therefore, the candidate for the ministry is employed in laying up a store of knowledge which may qualify him as an able minister of the New Testament, to declare unto men the whole counsel of God. And such is the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the human heart, and such is the cunning craftiness of the adversary of human souls, that we are liable to have our attention so completely occupied in accumulating material for qualifying us for the instruction of others, that we may lose sight of our own personal interest in the truths of the Bible, and may fail to make such application of them as is necessary to the advancement of spiritual life in our own souls. And hence it may come to pass that the Student of Theology, while constantly employed in the study of the Word of God, and while he has the bread of life in his own hands, may at the same time be the subject of spiritual declension, because he fails to appropriate the precious truths of the Gospel as the means of divine nourishment to his own soul.

It will of course be understood, that the candidate for the holy ministry will meet with the same impediments to his progress in holiness, which are common to all christians. He is a partaker of that depravity of nature which is the inheritance of all the descendants of Adam; and indwelling corruption will often do much to retard his advancement in the divine life. The world, the flesh, and the devil are his enemies, against whose power he, in common with all the followers of Christ, will have to contend; and through their influence he will be exposed to much opposition in the christian course. And, therefore, it will be necessary that he, in common with all the members of the household of faith, should put on the whole armor of God, that he may be able to stand against all the wiles of the devil. But it is supposed that there are some peculiar impediments in the way of the Student of Theology, arising out of the nature of his pursuit, and the object which he has in view; and to impediments of this character, our attention on the present occasion has been purposely confined. And having taken a hasty view of some of these, our next inquiry is, By what means may these impediments be most successfully overcome?

If I am correct in supposing that the principal impediment to the cultivation of a high degree of personal piety, on the part of the candidate for the holy ministry, consists in the danger to which he is exposed of failing to make use of the Word of God, which is the subject of his study, as the spiritual food of his own soul, it will then be no

difficult task to prescribe the remedy for the existing evil. The Bible must be studied not as a scientific treatise, but as a revelation from God; its doctrines must be regarded not as speculative principles, but as vital truths which must influence the heart and life; and while we labor assiduously to acquire a knowledge of the truth, we must keep constantly in view the personal application of the truth, as profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness. That our christian graces may be invigorated and our spiritual health promoted by means of the truth, which is the subject of our study, we must imitate the example of the ancient prophet, of whose experience we have the following record: "O Lord, thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and the rejoicing of my heart."—Jer. xv. 16.

Permit me, in conclusion, to call your attention briefly to a few practical directions, which may be of some advantage in the prosecution of the important object—the promotion of personal piety.

1. Read regularly every day a portion of the Word of God, for your personal improvement. In this exercise it is important that you divest yourself of the office of the critic, and that you place yourself in the attitude of a scholar at the feet of Jesus; that with the docility of a child you may learn what is his will. The critical investigation of the Scriptures will occupy our attention during the whole of our preparatory course. And to aid us in our critical researches, all our learning, and all the knowledge which we have obtained from scientific studies, may be advantageously employed. But as entirely distinct from this, the Scriptures should be read daily for practical improvement. And while thus employed, we should regard God as addressing us personally; and our object should be a particular application of the truth to our own case. Regarding the truths of the gospel as the bread of life, designed for the sustenance of the life of God in the soul, we should appropriate them to ourselves, as the means of spiritual nourishment and support. And thus, by obtaining daily supplies of this heavenly provision, our faith shall be strengthened, and we shall grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In reading and meditating upon the Sacred Scriptures, our object should be to cultivate intimate fellowship with God. Regarding Him as speaking to us in his Word on subjects involving our eternal interests, we should hearken to what he says, with the meekness and docility of children. His preceptive declarations we should apply for the regulation of our own conduct; the warnings of his Word should be so

improved, that we may be led thereby to avoid whatever is displeasing to him; his kind interposition in behalf of his people, in times of difficulty and of trial, should encourage us to look for help in every time of need, and stimulate us to steadfastness and perseverance in his service; and the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word, should be by faith appropriated to ourselves, that they be our counsellors in perplexity, our light in darkness, our support under trials, and our comfort in trouble. Thus reading and meditating upon, and applying to our own case, the Word of God, it becomes the nourishment of the new creature; and as the result, the christian graces are strengthened, and the work of holiness is advanced in the soul. Such was the use made of the Word of God by that devoted servant of the Lord, who exclaims, "O how I love thy law; it is my meditation all the day. How sweet are thy words unto my taste; yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth. Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart."

2. In the next place, as an important means of promoting the vigor of spiritual life, let me recommend particular attention to self-examination. This duty is often inculcated in the Sacred Scriptures: "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownselves. Know ye not, your ownselves, how that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." And in recording the exercises of his own mind, the Psalmist declares, "I commune with mine own heart, and my spirit made diligent search." While attention to this duty will be profitable to every christian, the nature of his pursuits renders it especially important to the Student of Theology. Being closely occupied with those studies, which have for their object the acquisition of that knowledge which is adapted for qualifying him for instructing others, he is in danger of being so much interested in that which is without, that he may be prevented from looking within. And the consequence is, that while he is laying up valuable knowledge on other subjects, he may remain comparatively ignorant in relation to the state of his own heart. And it may be regarded as absolutely certain, that where the exercise of communing with our own hearts is neglected, true religion, even if it should have an existence, cannot flourish in the soul.

The man of business who would be successful in the acquisition of wealth, must examine carefully the state of his accounts. He will compare his expenditures with his receipts; he will make a careful estimate of profit and loss, and regulate his course accordingly. The merchant who neglects thus to inquire into the state of his affairs, may be involv-

ed in bankruptcy before he is aware of his danger. No less important is it, for the christian who would succeed in laying up treasure in heaven, to inquire carefully how matters stand between God and his soul. Let, then, the candidate for the sacred office, whose aim it should be to possess the character of a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, spend much time in silently communing with his own heart. And to secure its faithful observance, let stated times be appropriated to this exercise. If no fixed time be set apart for the performance of this duty, it is likely to receive but little attention; or, perhaps, it may be altogether neglected.

While engaged in self-examination, let us remember that all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do; and let us deal faithfully with ourselves. In looking back upon the past, it will be proper to inquire with what temptations have we been assailed, and with what success have we met them? The result may be, that either our past experience will afford encouragement with reference to the future, or will teach us the necessity of greater caution and watchfulness. Has duty in any instance been neglected, or has any iniquity gained the ascendency over us? Are our minds becoming more deeply interested in divine things; or have we humbling evidence that our affections are growing more carnal? Do we find within ourselves a growing spirit of benevolence toward our fellow-men; more of the spirit of compassion for the souls of perishing sinners, and an increasing desire to labor for Him who loved us, and gave himself for us?

By thus carefully inquiring into the state of our own hearts, and scrutinizing the motives and the passions which influence our conduct, we shall find abundant cause for deep humiliation before God, while at the same time we may learn something to encourage us to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ; we shall discover more of the corruption of our own hearts, while we may see something to convince us more thoroughly of the sufficiency of divine grace, and lead us to rely upon it with more unshaken confidence. And the happy result will be, our advancement in holiness.

3. And finally, as an indispensable means to attain to a high degree of personal piety, let me urge upon you the importance of devoting much of your time to prayer. The great importance of prayer, as a means of promoting the advancement of the christian life, will appear from the frequency and earnestness with which the Scriptures urge this duty upon our attention. For example, "Be not slothful in busi-

ness; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; *continuing instant in prayer.*" "Be careful for nothing; but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." In connection with other duties of importance in the christian warfare, the Apostle adds, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance." And while our Lord urges upon his followers the importance of this duty, he gives the following direction with regard to the manner of its performance: "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which is in secret shall reward thee openly." In this exercise it is the privilege of the christian to retire from the society of earth, and hold direct and immediate intercourse with his heavenly Father. And the more he abounds in this exercise, and cultivates intimate fellowship with God, the more will he become assimilated to the divine image.

Let me, then, earnestly beseech you, as those who desire to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, cultivate familiarity with your closet. PRAY WITHOUT CEASING. If you would be made expert and successful "fishers of men," in this respect be followers of the example of your blessed Lord and Master. In the days of his flesh, he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared. At one time you behold him dismissing the multitudes who thronged around him, retiring from the society of men and going up "into a mountain apart, to pray." On another occasion you find him "in the morning rising up a great while before day," and retiring to a solitary place to engage in this delightful exercise. And again you find him upon the mountain, continuing "all night in prayer to God." With such a divine example before you, suffer me to say to you, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."

Be careful then, that you do not permit any other duty to occupy the place which is due to secret prayer. Every christian has his own individual mercies for which he should be thankful, and his own particular sins for which he needs forgiveness. Each one has his own peculiar temptations, trials and difficulties; and to support him under them he needs appropriate supplies. Then let him enter into his closet and pour out his heart before Him who seeth in secret. And let this duty be performed in faith. God hath revealed himself under the character

of the Hearer of prayer. He has said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth, is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of God." To ask any particular blessing of God, while there is not the exercise of faith leading us to expect an answer, is practically to call in question the truth and faithfulness of God. Let us, therefore, imitate the example of the Psalmist, who says, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer to thee, and look up." And having a great High-Priest who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. And the revelation which God has given of himself, should encourage us to persevere in the discharge of this duty, and to be importunate in our supplications. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him."

While I would have you cultivate great familiarity with your closet, I could wish that you would also properly appreciate the importance and the advantage of *social prayer*. One of the peculiar advantages which the candidate for the ministry enjoys in a Theological Seminary, above those which a private course of study affords, is the opportunity which is offered to those who are engaged in similar pursuits of associating together for prayer and conference, and other religious exercises; in the observance of which they may provoke one another to love and good works. And while social prayer affords peculiar advantages for the cultivation of the spirit of prayer, and also for acquiring a talent for the performance of this duty in public in such a manner as may be edifying to others, the Word of God presents special encouragement to the faithful performance of the duty. "If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." These words in their primary application, doubtless have reference to the Apostles in their official character, but they are evidently not to be restricted to them. And they certainly warrant this conclusion, that in conformity with the divine arrangement—social prayer, the united

fervent supplications of two or three, is peculiarly prevalent at the throne of grace. Suffer me, then, to say to you, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together for social worship, as the manner of some is, but regard this as a most effectual means of promoting the growth of your own souls, while it will exert a happy influence in qualifying you to perform the duty of prayer in public in a manner adapted to promote the edification of God's people.

And now in conclusion: as you are about to enter upon that course of study which is designed to qualify you for preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, suffer me with all earnestness and affection to say to you, that there is no qualification for the sacred office of equal importance with ardent, devoted piety. In all your studies, then, regard that wisdom which is the fear of the Lord, as "the principal thing," and let the acquisition of this wisdom be the object of your first concern. Though you could speak with the tongues of men and of angels; though you could understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and yet remain destitute of ardent love to the Lord Jesus, you would still lack that qualification which is requisite to fit you for the work of feeding the sheep of Christ. Mere knowledge, however varied and extensive, unaccompanied by the sanctifying influence of the grace of God, can neither be a source of support and comfort to your own souls, nor qualify you to become a blessing to the Church of Christ.

Let then a regard for your own highest interests unite with a desire to be instrumental in building up that kingdom which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, to urge you to attend to the cultivation of personal piety as the object of your chief solicitude. If God shall be pleased to succeed your efforts to acquire knowledge, and to cultivate the talents bestowed upon you, so that you may become learned and able and popular preachers of the Gospel, it is well. But let the object of your highest and holiest aspirations be, to possess the character of "*a good minister of Jesus Christ.*" It is not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord, that the kingdom of Christ is established in the hearts of men. And therefore, they are not generally the most successful preachers of the Gospel who are most distinguished for their learning and for their brilliant parts. Of Barnabas it is said, that when he came to Antioch, and "had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a *good man, and full of faith and of the Holy Ghost*, and much people was added unto the Lord." May such be your character, my dear young friends, even

though you should not gain the applause of an admiring world. May God, by the abundant communication of his grace, make you good men, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost; and then we may hope that through your ministry, much people shall be added to the Lord, who shall be your joy and crown of rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming. Amen.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF OUR SEMINARY.

The Theological Institution, to the students of which the above Address was delivered, was established in the year 1825. The Rev. Joseph Kerr, D. D. at that time Pastor of the St. Clair congregation, was chosen Professor. After having discharged the duties of his office for four years, this excellent man was removed by death. After the death of Dr. Kerr, such of the students as found it convenient to repair to his residence, pursued their Theological Studies under the care of Rev. Mungo Dick, for the two following years. At the meeting of Synod, in Pittsburgh, 19th October, 1831, the present Senior Professor was chosen.

In the year 1843, Synod established three Professorships in the Institution:

A Professorship of Theology—Didactic, Polemic, and Pastoral;

A Professorship of Biblical Literature and Criticism;

A Professorship of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government.

At the same time, the Rev. James L. Dinwiddie, D. D. was appointed Professor of Biblical Literature and Criticism; and the Professorship of Theology was assigned to the Senior Professor. It being at that time inconvenient for Synod to fill the chair of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government, the duties connected with that department were discharged by the Senior Professor.

About the middle of the third session, after Dr. Dinwiddie was elected, it pleased God in his mysterious providence, to lay his afflicting hand upon him, so that he was disqualified for rendering any further service to the Church. By this dispensation, the Senior Professor was once more left alone in the charge of the Seminary; and on him devolved the duties connected with the three Professorships in the Institution. In this situation, he remained until the meeting of Synod in 1847; at which time, the Rev. Alexander D. Clark, President of Franklin College, in New Athens, Ohio, was elected Professor of Biblical Literature and Criticism; and entered upon the discharge of the duties of his Professorship, at the commencement of the Session in 1848. And at its late meeting in Pittsburgh, Synod filled the vacancy in the Faculty by the election of Rev. D. R. Kerr; who will enter upon the duties of his office at the commencement of our next Session.

As yet, the Seminary possesses no buildings of its own. Through the liberality of the congregation forming the pastoral charge of the Senior Pro-

fessor, a spacious and convenient Lecture Room, and a room for the accommodation of the Library, are furnished free of charge, in the basement story of their Church. The Library, though not large, numbering about 1500 volumes, is yet select and valuable. And in consequence of various bequests left by friends of the Institution, the means are now in possession of Synod, which will enable us to enlarge the Library to an extent which will meet all necessary demands.

The term of study in the Seminary at present is four years; there being one Session of five months in each year, commencing on the first Monday in November. During the whole course the Bible is our text-book. The grand design of every exercise in the Seminary is to lead the student to a correct understanding of the lively Oracles, and to enable him to acquire the faculty of unfolding the truths of the Bible plainly and intelligibly to others. It is not the object of the Instructors to communicate a large amount of knowledge, but to aid the student in the investigation of truth for himself; that thus knowledge may be acquired as the fruits of his own labor.

The following outline of the Course of Study, adopted by the Synod, will give a general view of the manner in which the course of instruction is conducted in the Seminary:

COURSE OF STUDY.

1. The reading and critical investigation of the Sacred Scriptures, in the Hebrew and Greek languages, shall occupy a prominent place in the whole course. Everything included under the head of Biblical Antiquities, Natural History, Chronology and Sacred Geography, shall here be introduced. The great design of Theological Study shall be to qualify the student for the correct interpretation of the Sacred Text.

2. The study of the doctrines of the Bible in systematic order. In this department, the attention of the Student shall be occupied with everything included under the heads of Didactic and Polemic Theology. Here the first subjects of inquiry shall be, what are the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, as exhibited in our ecclesiastical standards, and what their connection and dependence? The great object in this branch of study shall be, to qualify the Student for holding forth the Faithful Word, and to enable him, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince gainsayers.

3. The careful examination of the history of the Church of Christ, from its first establishment till the present time. Here the attention of the Student shall be directed to the origin and progress of the Church; the ordinances of religious worship; and the corruptions, whether of doctrine, worship, or government, which have been at different times introduced into the Church. The principal design in this department shall be to enable the Student to know how he ought to behave himself in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.

CATALOGUE OF STUDENTS

Who have Entered the Seminary since its Organization, in 1825.

1825.

*Samuel F. Smith, Cochranton, Pa.
John Stark, Middletown, Pa.
*Wm. Wallace, D. D. Canonsburg, Pa.

1826.

Samuel C. Baldridge, Princeton, Ia.
*John Dickey, Allegheny Co. Pa.
*James Reynolds, Preble Co. O.
Benjamin Waddle, New Concord, O.
James Worth, Spring Hill, Ia.

1827.

Henry Connelly, Newburg, N. Y.
*Joseph R. Kerr, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Hugh Parks, St. Clairsville, O.
Robert Stuart, Eckmansville, O.

1828.

*Moses Kerr, Pittsburgh, Pa.
*A. S. Fulton, Pittsburgh, Pa.

1829.

John E. Heanor, Cumberland Co. Pa.
*James N. Gamble, Logan Co. O.
James Shields, Mexico, Pa.

1830.

William Boyce, Richmond, Ia.
N. C. Weed, Northampton, Ill.

1831.

Andrew Bower, Philadelphia, Pa.
William Findley, Prospect, Pa.
*John L. Dinwiddie, Mercer, Pa.
*Johnston Welsh, New Athens, O.
*J. G. Witherspoon, York Co. S. C.
*Stephen L. Haft, Sharon, O.
*Jeremiah Morrow, Warren Co. O.
James C. Porter, Little Rock, Ill.
Saml. Taggart, West Middletown, Pa.

1832.

William Burnett, Manchestsr, Pa.
James Caskey, Ripley, O.
J. N. Gamble, Logan Co. O.
Robert Graccy, Chambersburg, Pa.
*M. B. Johnston, Cumberland Co. Pa.
Robert M'Elroy, Darlington, Pa.
Mathew M'Kinstry, Juniata Co. Pa.
*Joseph Osborn, Turtle Creek, Pa.

1833.

James R. Bonner, Dayton, O.
John H. Bonner, Wilkinsburg, Pa.
J. G. Fulton, Freeport, Pa.
W. R. Hemphill, Due West, S. C.
James Prestly, Cincinnati, O.
John Neill, Mt. Jackson, Pa.
*James F. Sawyer, Warren Co. O.
Thomas Turner, Georgia.
William Turner, Bloomington, Ia.
J. L. Young, Lawrenceville, S. C.
John Wilson, Tipton Co. Tenn.

1834.

Joseph Caldwell, *Missionary to India.*
William Lorimer, Richmond, O.
*Joseph M'Crery, Abbeville Dist. S. C.
Robert M'Coy, Chester District, S. C.
John C. Steele, Indianapolis, Ia.

1835.

Jos. S. Buchanan, West Alexandria, Pa.
Wilson Blain, *Missionary to Oregon.*
John Ekin, Remington, Alleg. Co. Pa.
John Freetly, Oquawka, Ill.
James Greer, Noblestown, Pa.
*Thomas Mehard, New Castle, Pa.
Alexander Miller, Ohio.
*Wm. Laughridge, Mansfield, O.
John M. Galloway, Steubenville, O.
John N. Pressly, Lafayette, Ia.

Richard Gailey, Hastings, O.
*Thomas L. Speer, Washington, Pa.
Joseph Thompson, Lockport, Ia.
*James Walker, Canonsburg, Pa.

1836.

J. H. Buchanan, Cedarville, O.
W. G. Canders, Westmoreland Co. Pa.
*J. M'Clure, Allegheny Co. Pa.

1837.

W. P. Breaden, Coultersville, Pa.
E. B. Calderhead, Gratiot, O.
J. M. Dick, *Missionary to Oregon.*
J. J. Findley, Waterford, Pa.
W. T. Findley, Chillicothe, O.
J. M. Gordon, Illinois.
D. R. Kerr, Prof. A. R. Seminary, Allegheny City, Pa.
C. T. M'Caughan, Sidney, O.
J. M'Gregor, Allegheny Co. Pa.

1838.

J. J. Buchanan, Allegheny City, Pa.
*William Caskey, Adams Co. O.
H. L. Forsythe, Fairview, O.
J. Gilmore, Tarentum, Pa.
J. M. Graham, New York.
W. M. Graham, Virginia Grove, Iowa.
J. F. Kerr, Oswego, Ia.
J. M'Cague, Brown Co. O.
J. S. M'Cracken, Kenton, O.
J. H. Pressly, Erie, Pa.
D. F. Reid, Keene, O.
G. Wilson, Ohio.
A. C. Wright, New York.

1839.

David Carnahan, Pottsville, Pa.
Samuel Findley, Jr. Chillicothe, O.
D. B. Jones, Ritchie Co. Va.
N. B. Nelson, Pittsburgh, Pa.
R. W. Oliver, West Middlesex, Pa.
J. H. Peacock, Mt. Vernon, O.
J. B. Scouller, Cuylersville, N. Y.
Samuel Wallace, Bellefontaine, O.
A. Young, St. Clairsville, O.

1840.

R. A. Browne, New Castle, Pa.
A. D. Clark, Prof. A. R. Seminary, Allegheny City, Pa.
Joseph Buchanan, Steubenville, O.
Thomas Calahan, Hookstown, Pa.
*J. W. Duff, Blairsville, Pa.
John Dick, Kittanning, Pa.
H. H. Johnson, Dayton, O.
John S. Pressly, Abbeville Dist. S. C.
*Ebenezer Palmer, Carrolton, O.
J. K. Riddle, Pennsylvania.
R. G. Thompson, Plymouth, O.
*John Walker, Washington, O.

1841.

*James Buchanan, Lancaster, Pa.
William Carlisle, Chanceford, Pa.
R. D. Harper, Xenia, O.
*Jonathan Herron, Allegh'y City, Pa.
Alex. Pattison, New London, Iowa.
David Pressly, Starkville, Miss.
J. Y. Scouller, Fairhaven, O.

1842.

John G. Brown, Pittsburgh, Pa.
D. S. Cochran, Ellisville, Ill.
W. H. Jamieson, Highlandtown, O.
W. T. M'Adam, Mercer, Pa.
Isaac M'Laughlin, Virginia.
*J. P. Pinkerton, Fairhaven, O.
Joseph D. Steele, Bourbon Co. Ky.
*Walter Steele, Bourbon Co. Ky.
H. H. Thompson, Sugar Creek, Pa.
M. H. Wilson, Jacksonville, Pa.

1843.

Robert Armstrong. Shousetown, Pa.
S. W. Clarke, Calcutta, O.
John M'Clean, New Brighton, Pa.
D. H. Pollock, Connellsville, Pa.
A. G. Shafer, Bakerstown, Pa.

1844.

*S. P. Berry, Monroe, O.
J. C. Campbell, Wellsville, O.
J. H. Fife, Baldwin, Pa.
James Greer, Jr. Allegheny City, Pa.
Samuel Jameson, Elizabeth, Pa.
Leander H. Long, Urbana, O.
*Thomas M'Cague, Ripley, O.
W. S. M'Laren, Caledonia, N. Y.
Randall Ross, Sharon, O.
Robert W. Brice, Fairfield Dist. S. C.
William Dalzell, Davenport, Iowa.
W. C. Jackson, Washington Co. Pa.

W. A. Mehard, New Wilmington, Pa.
S. Patterson, Darlington, Pa.
Chesterfield Robb, Allegheny Co. Pa.
Joseph White, Prof. Richmond Coll. O.

1846.

G. D. Archibald, Manchester, Pa.
J. K. Andrews, Antrim, O.
Mathew Bigger, New Concord, O.
*W. J. Brown, Augusta Co. Va.
John Bryson, Tarentum, Pa.
*John Chambers, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Vincent Cockins, Pittsburgh, Pa.
T. R. Gilmore, Cadiz, O.
John D. Glenn, Murray, Ind.
James Golden, Carrollton, O.
Robert Henry, Springfield, O.
James Kelso, Antrim, Pa.
Samuel Kerr, Allegheny City, Pa.
J. T. M'Clure, Wheeling, Va.
W. G. Reed, Allegheny City, Pa.
J. S. Robertson, Tarentum, Pa.
W. M. Sharpe, Abbeville District, S. C.
J. R. Sturgeon, Noblestown, Pa.
J. R. Warner, Allegheny City, Pa.

1847.

James Borrows, New Concord, O.
John Coman, Claysville, O.
John L. Craig, Allegheny City, Pa.
W. R. Erskine, Washington Co. Pa.
*A. G. Fergus, Elizabeth, Pa.
Wm. M'Millan, Allegheny City, Pa.
*Paul B. Sherrard, New Concord, O.
J. R. Walker, Allegheny City, Pa.

1848.

Mathew Clarke, Indiana, Pa.
T. M. Cunningham, New Concord, O.
*Samuel Dougan, Pittsburgh, Pa.
T. Drennen, Belmont Co. O.
S. M. Hutchison, Taylorstown, Pa.
James Forsythe, Mt. Vernon, O.
H. H. Hervey, Tarentum Pa.
*William Hixon, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.
E. M'Caughey, Fredericksburg, O.
H. C. M'Farland, Shirland, Pa.
George Ormond, Birmingham, Pa.

1849.

George C. Arnold, Frankfort, Pa.
John B. Clarke, Washington, O.
J. R. M'Calister, York Co. Pa.
Thos. H. M'Ewen, West Middlesex, Pa.
James C. M'Knight, Meadville, Pa.
A. G. Wallace, Herriottsville, Pa.
James Duncan, Cambridge, O.

1850.

D. D. Christy, Butler, Pa.
R. N. Dick, Brush Valley, Pa.
P. H. Drennen, Elizabeth, Pa.
James Given, Allegheny City, Pa.
Samuel Glover, Ireland.
James M. Gorsuch, Hookstown, Pa.
John Jamison, Middletown, Pa.
Thomas Love, Shepherdstown, O.
Robert M'Watty, Mt. Jackson, Pa.
C. K. Potter, Fayette, Pa.
Samuel F. Thompson, Tyro, O.
Saml. F. Vanata, West Alexander, Pa.
W. W. Waddle, Wheeling, Va.
D. A. Wallace, Fall River, Mass.
R. H. Young, Allegheny City, Pa.

1851.

J. Cook Brisbin, Richmond, O.
Oliver Catz, Antrim, Pa.
Will. D. Kearns, Temperanceville, Pa.
Wm. G. M'Creary, Canonsburg, Pa.
W. C. M'Cune, Beaver Co. Pa.
J. R. Brown, Preble Co. O.
D. L. M'Dill, Preble Co. O.

* Deceased.

Total, - - - - - - - - : -	218
Deceased while in the Ministry, - -	25
" " Students, - - - - -	12

Present Faculty.

JOHN T. PRESSLY, D. D.

Professor of Theology—Didactic, Polemic and Pastoral.

REV. A. D. CLARK,

Professor of Biblical Literature and Criticism.

REV. D. R. KERR,

Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government.

CATALOGUE OF STUDENTS,

FOR THE SESSION OF 1851 & 1852.

FIRST YEAR.

NAMES.	RESIDENCES.
J. Cook Brisbin,	*Richmond, Ohio.*
Oliver Catz,	*Antrim, Pa.*
Will D. Kearns,	*Temperanceville, Pa.*
Wm. G. McCreary,	*Canonsburg,* "
W. C. McCune,	*Beaver Co.* "

First Year, 5.

SECOND YEAR.

D. D. Christy,	*Butler, Pa.*
R. N. Dick,	*Brush Valley, Pa.*
P. H. Drennen,	*Elizabeth,* "
James Given,	*Allegheny City,* "
Jas. M. Gorsuch,	*Hookstown,* "
John Jamison,	*Middletown,* "
Thomas Love,	*Shepherdstown,* "
Robert McWatty,	*Mt. Jackson,* "
C. K. Potter,	*Fayette,* "
Samuel F. Vanata,	*West Alexander, Pa.*
W. W. Waddle,	*Wheeliny, Va.*
R. H. Young,	*Allegheny City, Pa.*

Second Year, 12.

THIRD YEAR.

Geo. C. Arnold,	*Frankfort, Pa.*
J. R. Brown,	*Preble Co. Ohio.*
S. M. Hutchison,	*Taylorstown, Pa.*
J. R. McCalister,	*York Co.* "
D. L. McDill,	*Preble Co. Ohio.*
James C. McKnight,	*Meadville, Pa.*
A. G. Wallace,	*Herriotsville, Pa.*

Third Year, 7.

FOURTH YEAR.

NAMES.	RESDENCES.
John B. Clark,	*Washington, Ohio.*
Mathew Clarke,	*Indiana, Pa.*
T. M. Cunningham,	*New Concord, Ohio.*
T. Drennen,	*St. Clairsville,* "
James C. Forsythe,	*Mt. Vernon,* "
Hugh H. Hervey,	*Tarentum, Pa.*
Elijah McCaughey,	*Fredericksburg, Ohio.*
H. C. McFarland,	*Shirland, Pa.*
Wm. McMillan,	*Allegheny, City, Pa.*

Fourth Year, 9.

SUMMARY.

First Year, - - - - -	5
Second Year, - - - - -	12
Third Year, - - - - -	7
Fourth Year, - - - - -	9
Total, - - -	33

Rev W. R. Hemphill

Due West,

Abbeville Dist

So. Ca.

PAID

Pa.

ALLEGHENY CITY

DEC

11

Pa.

Rev. Wm R. Hemphill

Due West

Abbeville Dist

S. C.